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RECORD COLLECTOR news

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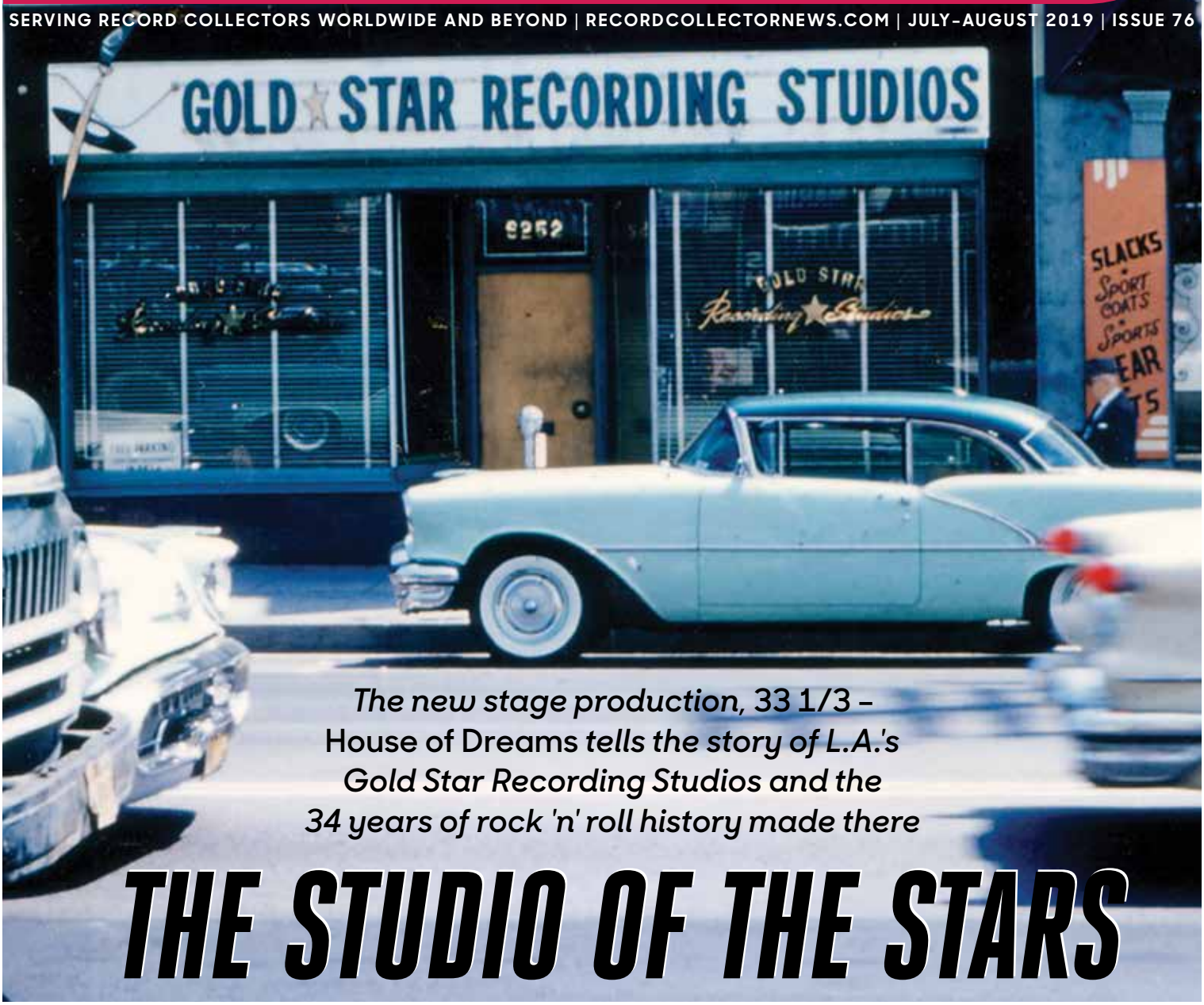

The new stage production, 33 1/3 – House of Dreams tells the story of L.A.'s Gold Star Recording Studios and the 34 years of rock 'n' roll history made there

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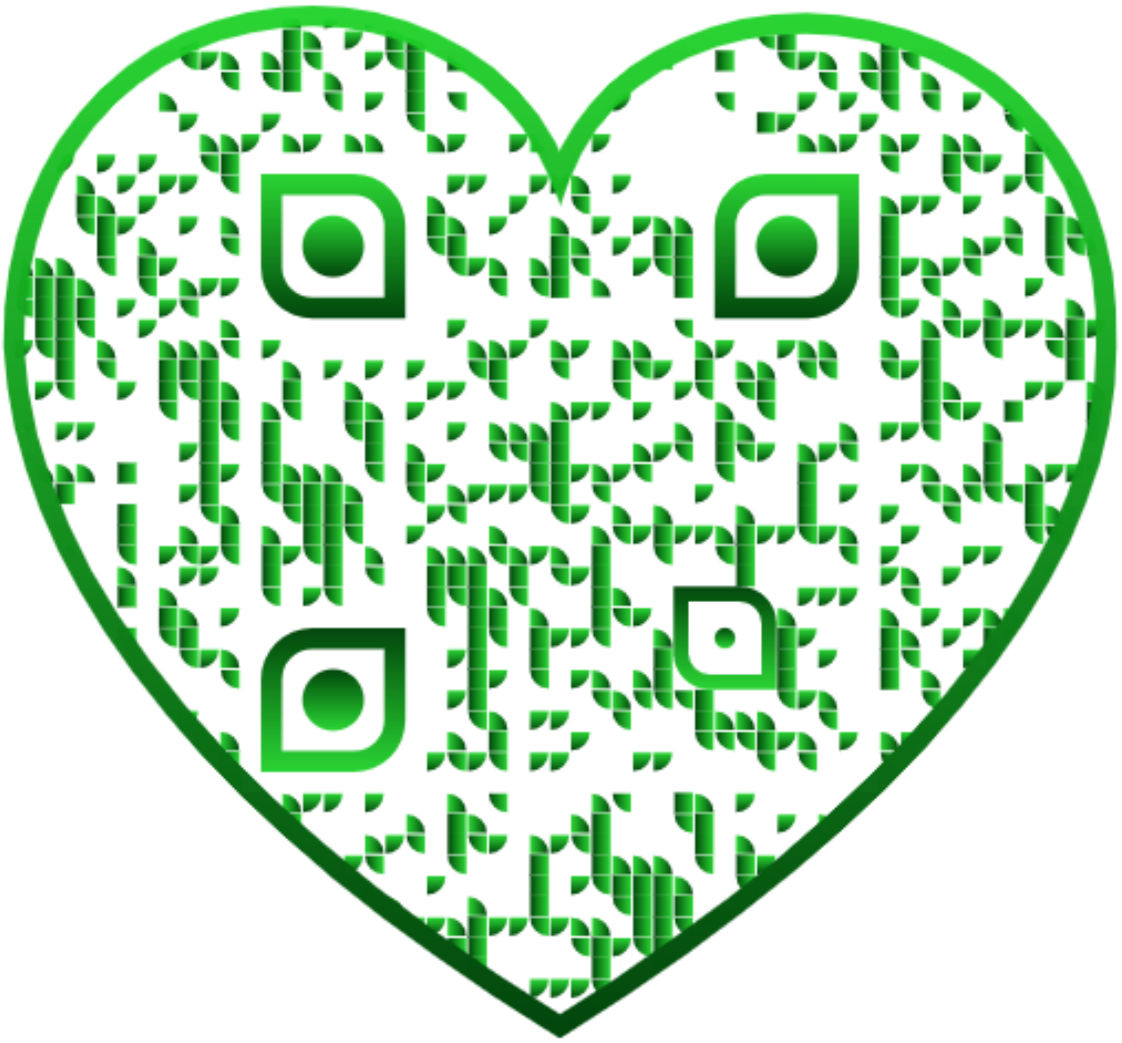
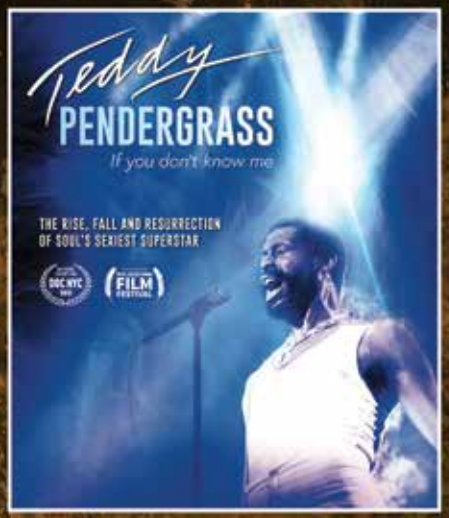


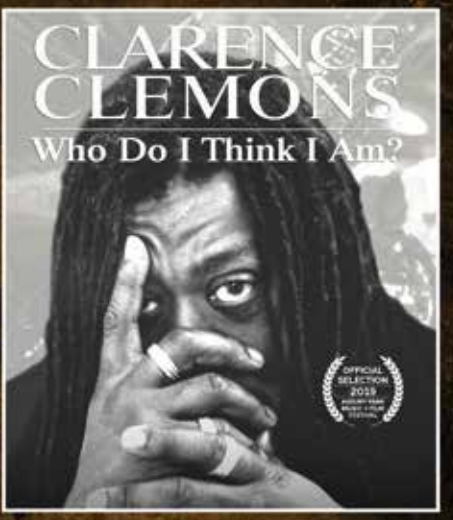


TEDDY PENDERGRASS
If You Don't Know Me

The untold and ultimately inspiring story of legendary singer, Teddy Pendergrass, the man poised to be the biggest R&B artist of all time until the tragic accident that changed his life forever. The unforgettable voice of hits Don't Leave Me This Way, If You Don't Know Me By Now, Love T.K.O and Close the Door, Teddy was the first male African American artist to record five consecutive platinum albums in the US, but his career was struck by tragedy in 1982 left him paralysed at the age of just 31. He later made a triumphant comeback in front of a global audience of 1.9 billion at Live Aid. Featuring revealing interviews with his family, friends and colleagues alongside industry legends, Kenny Gamble and Leon Huff, rarely seen archive footage and a soulful soundtrack.

CLARENCE CLEMONS
Who Do You Think I Am?

After Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band's marathon "Rising Tour" came to an end in 2003, Clarence Clemons felt like he needed a break. So he packed up his saxophone and voyaged to China, where he could be more-or-less a nameless traveler in a foreign land. "WHO DO I THINK I AM" continued to follow Clarence after China and document his transcendent awakening and then tragedy struck. While in Florida Clarence suffered a stroke and passed away.



DOWN HOME BLUES
Chicago Volume 2: Sweet Home Chicago

Continuing the mix of well-known artists to the lesser-known, all the recordings are prime Chicago masterworks. With big hitters like Muddy Waters, Little Walter and Sonny Boy Williamson, all their tracks are alternate takes or originally unissued masters by the record companies, most of which are currently not available on release. Mixing with these three there are many more stars of this down home genre including Albert King, Jimmy Reed and Memphis Minnie, again with alternate recordings of their best well-known music.

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ON THE COVER
Gold Star Recording Studios, 1950s
From the Stan Ross Archives

Without deviation from the norm, progress is not possible.
– Frank Zappa

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Stones, Costello and McCartney

THE ROLLING STONES' 2019 No Filter North American tour started in June and is booked into late August including a date in Southern California August 22nd at The Rose Bowl. We'll be there. The group's stage repertoire incorporates deep catalog and radio anthems. Also published is a new book on the band by Christopher McKittrick *Can't Give It Away On Seventh Avenue: The Rolling Stones and New York City.* It explores the rich history of the Rolling Stones and New York City and the impact the city had on the group's music and career.

DURING PAUL MCCARTNEY'S North American leg of his record-breaking Freshen Up tour, Paul has confirmed updated releases of four albums capturing performances spanning from his 1975-1976 return to U.S. arenas with Wings to his intimate 2007 set at Amoeba records in Los Angeles. The albums —*Amoeba Gig, Paul Is Live, Choba B CCCP, Wings Over America* — will be released July 12, 2019 via MPL/Capitol/UMe digitally, on CD and on both black and limited-edition color vinyl. *Wide Prairie*, a posthumous 1998 compilation of Linda McCartney recordings spanning the early 1970s through the late 1990s, will be re-released August 2 via MPL / Capitol / UMe.

OUT NOW IS A PREVIOUSLY unreleased concert film *Carole King-Live At Montreux 1973* on DVD & CD, CD and vinyl via Eagle Vision. It's a landmark show. Songwriter/pianist/vocalist King and her stellar band performed live at the Montreux Pavillon as part of the world-famous Montreux Jazz Festival. The set features hits from the albums Tapestry, Fantasy, and Writer.

CRAFT RECORDINGS HAS shipped *Soul Explosion* which celebrates a 50th anniversary of this prolific, make-or-break moment for Stax — and its enduring musical legacy — with additional physical and digital reissues that will pay tribute to the label throughout the year with a series of playlists, original content, contests and more. The Craft label is album releasing *Live At Woodstock*, capturing Creedence Clearwater Revival's full, hour-long performance from the historic festival. Out August 2nd, *Live At Woodstock* will be available as a 2-LP vinyl set, housed in a gatefold jacket, as well as on CD and digital platforms.

MVD ENTERTAINMENT Group has just made available *Pretenders-With Friends.* A 2006 Pretenders' live concert featuring Chrissie Hynde with special guests including Iggy Pop, Shirley Manson of Garbage, Kings of Leon and Incubus, recorded at the Decades Rock Arena in Atlantic City, NJ.

MARIANNE & Leonard: Words of Love is the latest from docu-

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mentarian Nick Broomfield who invites audiences into the world of Leonard Cohen and his muse, Marianne Ihlen. Marianne & Leonard: Words of Love is in select US theaters July 5.

ELVIS COSTELLO & THE Imposters and Blondie will co-headline a coast-to-coast tour this summer. The Imposters are: Steve Nieve (keyboards), Davey Faragher (bass) and Pete Thomas (drums). Produced by Live Nation, the 13-city tour will kick off July 20th in Bethel, NY at the Bethel Woods Center for the Arts and make stops in Boston, Las Vegas, Los Angeles at the Greek Theater August 5th where RCN will be in attendance, and more, before wrapping August 10th in Seattle, WA.

LONGTIME *RCN* SUPPORTER and former Foothill Records owner, Carol Schofield of MsMusic Productions has a new record shop, High Desert Records in Yucca Valley.

"High Desert Records will have the same quality and style as Foothill Records had though smaller space size," explained Carol. "Why Yucca? It's my home now along with the desire staying connected to the energy built with Foothill Records. "

WE AT *RCN* OWE A DEBT OF gratitude to Art Kunkin who died this past May in Joshua Tree. Kunkin founded *The Los Angeles Free Press* in 1964, one of the first underground weekly newspapers that were a groundbreaking alternative mainstream media to cover and appreciate Pop, Rock, R&B, Country, Bluegrass and Jazz music.

Kunkin gave a forum to Frank Zappa and other regional visionaries. *The Los Angeles Times* hailed him "as the Pied piper of counterculture in 1960s L.A."

Harvey Kubernik profiled Kunkin in his landmark 2009 book *Canyon of Dreams: The Magic and the Music of Laurel Canyon*. Kunkin told Kubernik, "I was aware that the music industry was supporting the Free Press. The paper had music people. I was the prankster. I think one of the important things I did, which I don't think is terribly appreciated, is I helped establish a whole number of newspapers."

RCN AND THE ENTIRE GLOBAL record collecting world also lost a dear member of our family in June. Gary Schneider, music scholar, deejay and a fixture at the Pasadena Record swap meet. Gary was the owner/operator of Open Mynd Collectibles since 1992, and gave us so many rare recordings, artifacts and air checks (radio broadcasts). Gary has been referenced in several books, CD liner notes, and documentaries for his opinion and experience with radio broadcasts of the '50s and '60s.

"Gary Schneider made an incredible contribution to our community of music enthusiasts, blowing minds with his deep knowledge and passionate curation of all things popular music," offered close friend, Elliot Kendall, a veteran record lover, music and film promoter. "His love and kindness towards everyone who showed an interest in collecting and pop culture continue to inspire us all — I'm so pleased that his Open Mynd Excursion radio shows will thankfully continue to air on Luxuria Music."

Gary's "Open Mynd Excursion" internet radio program can be heard via archived episodes on luxuriamusic.com. Listen each Wednesday from 9pm–11pm Pacific Time.

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All Things Elvis

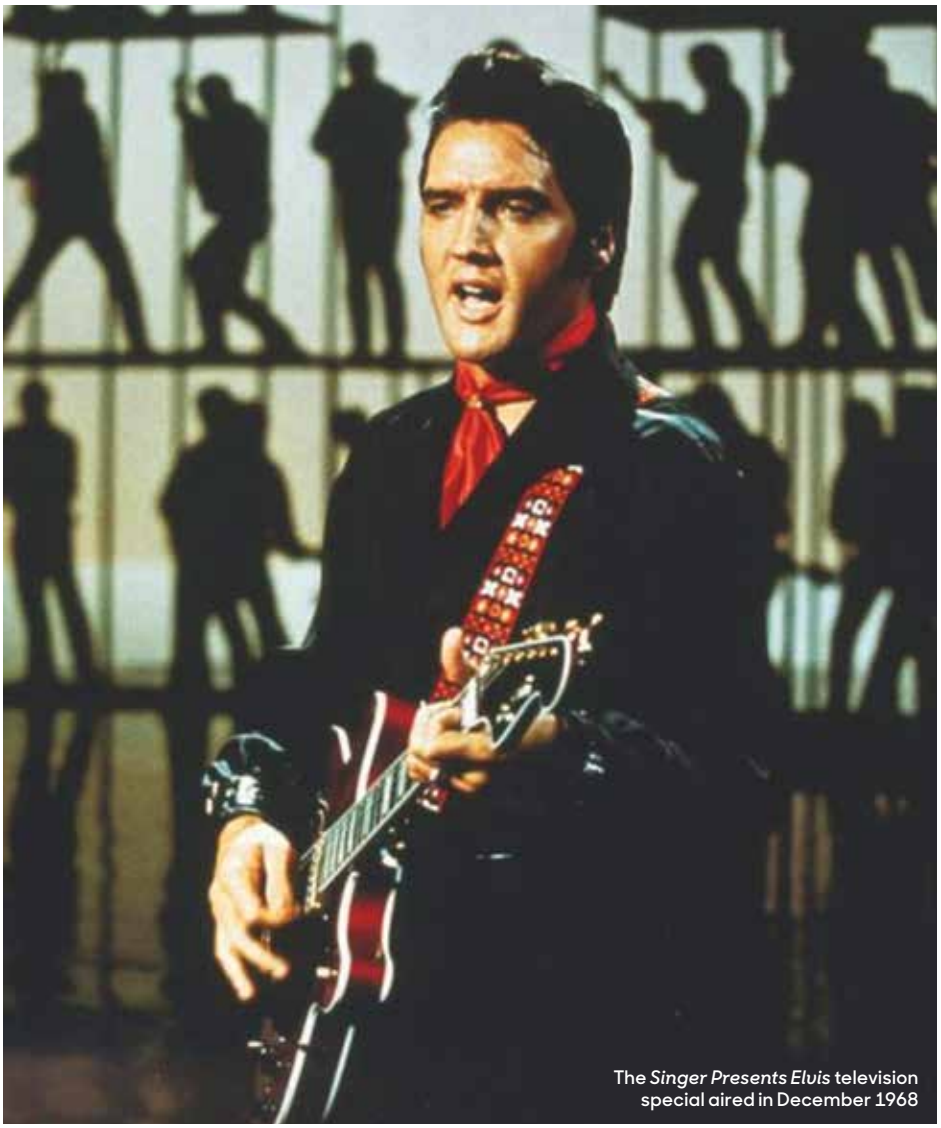
The Follow That Dream label offers live and expanded Elvis recordings

BY GILLIAN G. GAAR

IT'S THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ONE of the most important years in Elvis Presley's life: 1969. Still riding high on the success of his *Singer Presents Elvis* television special that aired in December 1968, he booked his first sessions in Memphis since the fifties, at Chips Moman's legendary American Sound Studios. In January and February 1969, he recorded some of his best material, including classics like "Suspicious Minds," "In the Ghetto," and "Kentucky Rain." And then he topped it all off by returning to live performance that July and August at the International Hotel in Las Vegas (later the Las Vegas Hilton, and today the Westlake Las Vegas).

RCA/Legacy is planning an anniversary package commemorating those live shows, "covering all of the August 1969 live recordings," as the label puts it. This past Record Store Day offered a teaser for what's in store with the release of the double album *The International Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, August 23, 1969* (which also included a download of the album). It's a previously unreleased performance, the dinner show from that date, coming near the end of Elvis's record-breaking engagement, which closed on August 28.

Elvis was in fine form during the run, eager to get back to live performance after drifting through the previous decade in a series of increasingly execrable movies. Indeed, he sounds positively manic in the show's opener, "Blue Suede Shoes." The set lists were pretty standard, with a focus on his '50s classics, moving into the modern era at the halfway point. He was also pretty talkative, again sounding hyperactive and actually rather nervous as he continually cracks jokes. This August 23 show sounds much like the ones that have been released over the years (both officially and otherwise), with a great cover shot showing just how kinetic the performances were. It will be interesting to see if RCA/Legacy manages to find any surprises for the upcoming box.



The *Singer Presents Elvis* television special aired in December 1968

Serious Elvis fans are undoubtedly well acquainted with the Follow That Dream official collector's label, which offers live recordings and expanded versions of Elvis's albums. Having released expanded editions of his movie soundtracks, they're now started to release what you might call "enhanced" expanded editions, going from one CD to three (some releases have later appeared on vinyl). The first soundtrack to get this treatment was *The Viva Las Vegas Sessions*, released last year. Now comes *The Fun In Acapulco Sessions*. This 1963 film was one of Elvis' kitschier efforts. He

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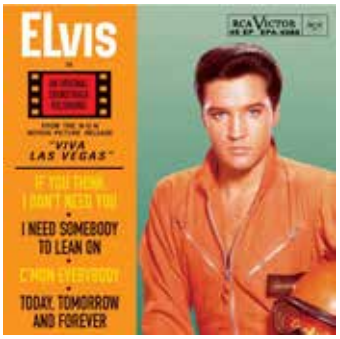

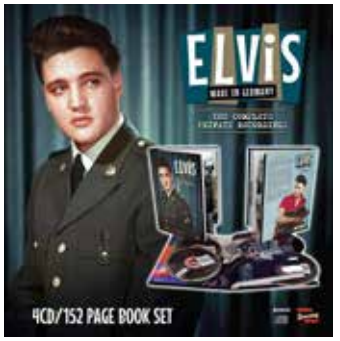

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plays a former trapeze artist, traumatized by an accident that led to his brother's death during their act, seeking refuge at a resort in Acapulco, where he works as a lifeguard and nightclub singer.

"Elvis Sings 13 Great Songs" promised the copy on the original album's front cover. Well, not quite. There is one excellent number, "Bossa Nova Baby," a fun slice of Latin-tinged pop that became a Top 10 hit (the liner notes scrupulously point out that the comma after the word "Nova" in the title only appeared on the original album label and sheet music, and was then dropped). The rest is decidedly a mixed bag. Elvis can't even keep a straight face as he works his way through seventeen takes of "The Bullfighter was a Lady," in one instance reworking the chorus into something that was definitely not family friendly:

"The bullfighter was a lady
It was true love at first sight
Her red cape was waving
But Pedro was shaving
He wanted to fuck her that night!"

That version didn't make the final cut.

I actually enjoy this film for its camp value. "Guadalajara" has a production number to rival "Bossa Nova Baby," and both "Bullfighter" and "El Toro" benefit from his elegant costumes he wears when performing the songs in the film. Then there are more pedestrian numbers, like "Mexico" (nonetheless, a Top 10 hit in Europe), "I Think I'm Gonna Like It Here," and "You Can't Say No in Acapulco" (and we will only mention "[There's] No Room to Rhumba in a Sports Car" once, never to speak of it again). The original album also added two non-soundtrack cuts, the pretty, but unremarkable "Love Me Tonight" and forgettable "Slowly But Surely."

Which makes this set something of mixed blessing. You get apparently everything Elvis recorded in the quick two-day session (including interesting takes of Ernesto Lecuona's classic instrumental "Malaguena"). But you'd have more appreciation for that if the songs were stronger. Still, it's nice to see FTD continuing to dig out more material from the vaults. The set has a more substantial booklet than FTD's other releases (though I miss the "In And Outtakes" listing, that identified where each track first appeared), with some good essays by Alan Hanson, one of the better Elvis writers (check out his blog, elvis-history-blog.com). Presumably there are more in the *Sessions* series to come; I eagerly await *The King Creole Sessions*. (Available from shopelvis.com)

Elvis can't even keep a straight face as he works his way through seventeen takes of "The Bullfighter was a Lady," in one instance reworking the chorus into something that was definitely not family friendly.

The clever folks at Memphis Recording Service have put together another nice Elvis collection: *Made in Germany: The Complete Private Recordings*. This four CD set (the vinyl is already sold out) looks at the home recordings Elvis made for his own amusement while he was serving his time in the army, in Germany. When he was off duty, Elvis loved to relax by singing songs with his friends, especially hymns and religious music. What's especially fascinating is hearing Elvis working on songs he later released, including "Danny Boy," "I'll Take You Home Again Kathleen," "His Hand in Mine," and "Like a Baby." You hear his father Vernon making some contributions to "I'm Beginning to Forget You." And it's exciting to hear early renditions of "Are You Lonesome Tonight," and "There's No Tomorrow," which, with new lyrics, would become "It's Now or Never."

Some of this material has been previously released. But while FTD's *For LP Fans Only* featured edited highlights of the recordings, the second CD on *Made in Germany* presents the entire tape of the same home session. This is true throughout the set; much of the third CD appeared on FTD's *A Date With Elvis* — but *Made in Germany* has twenty minutes that didn't appear on that release. So it's well worth picking up this set, even if you have the FTD releases. There are also some brief interviews with Elvis just prior to his embarking for Germany.

For some reason, the set covers Elvis' recording sessions in 1957 and '58, and one of the CDs features the master recordings from those years. To me, that feels superfluous, and takes away from the "Made in Germany" aspect of the set, and I would've preferred the accompanying text taking a more extensive look at the home demo songs. I've also found it difficult to get the CDs out of the packaging, due to its unusual design, which holds the discs down so tightly I fear I'm going to snap them in two (after taking them out once, I store them elsewhere). Nonetheless, it's still a very nice package, illustrated with numerous photos from the era. Definitely a set that gives FTD a run for its money. (Available from memphisrecordingservice.com).

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The Studio of the Stars

The 33 1/3 – House of Dreams is a theatrical and musical tribute to Gold Star Recording Studios, filled with the rock 'n' roll classics that were created and captured at that storied, Los Angeles' landmark

BY HARVEY KUBERNIK

STAN ROSS ARCHIVES

SAN DIEGO REPERTORY Theatre (San Diego REP announced that they will be partnering with the San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts (SDSCPA) and R & R Productions, LLC for the world premiere musical *33 1/3 - House of Dreams*. Written by local San Diegans Jonathan Rosenberg and Brad Ross, with additional contributions by Steve Gunderson and Javier Velasco, the debut production chronicles the success of Gold Star Recording Studios through the history of rock 'n' roll.

The production will feature direction and choreography by Javier Velasco with musical direction and arrangements by Steve Gunderson. *33 1/3 - House of Dreams* will run August 1 – 25, 2019, at San Diego REP's Lyceum Stage Theatre, with previews August 1 - 6, and press opening on Wednesday, August 7 at 7:00 p.m.

33 1/3 - HOUSE OF DREAMS TELLS THE STORY of the legendary Gold Star Recording Studios and its co-founder, lead engineer and hit maker Stan Ross. In Hollywood for 33 1/3 years, Gold Star was the birthplace of some of the greatest pop and rock hits of all time. Imagine a story featuring the music of a young Phil Spector and his Wall of Sound, The Beach Boys, Eddie Cochran, Sonny and Cher, Ike & Tina Turner, The Righteous Brothers, Ritchie Valens and many, many more.

The show's 30-song playlist includes rock 'n' roll classics such as "Summertime Blues," "La Bamba," "Good Vibrations," "Be My Baby," "Unchained Melody," "Wouldn't It Be Nice" "In A Gadda Da Vida," "Tequila," "Be My Baby," "Da Doo Run Run," River Deep, Mountain High," "Let's Dance," "Rhythm of the Rain," "He's a Rebel," "The In Crowd," "Grazin' In The Grass" and "Rockin' Robin."

"The creation of *33 1/3 - House of Dreams* is the culmination of efforts to share the story of what happened within the walls of Gold Star Recording Studios," shared writers and co-creators Jonathan Rosenberg and Brad Ross.

"Our musical is a way for us to honor the hit music and achievements through one of its co-owners, Stan Ross. He was the personality, lead engineer and mentor at Gold Star. His creative pioneering along with his partner's technical knowledge and studio design led them to develop Phil Spector's famous Wall of Sound

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

productions. Stan's story is our story, and is still relevant today."

BRAD ROSS IS THE CO-WRITER OF *33 1/3 - House of Dreams* and a practicing dentist in San Diego, California. Raised in Burbank, California, the story of *33 1/3 - House of Dreams* centers around his father Stan Ross – co-owner and engineer at Gold Star Recording Studios in Hollywood who died on March 11, 2011 following an operation to correct an abdominal aneurysm at age 82.

Brad participated in interviewing many artists, producers, songwriters, musicians, arrangers, music historians, and ex-employees who recorded at Gold Star. His passion for sharing the stories and music of Gold Star inspired Brad to collaborate with his patient, Jonathan Rosenberg to develop this project. Brad is a graduate of Oregon State University and USC School of Dentistry.

"After the death of my father in 2011, I took on the role of creating a production that would tell his life story," explained Ross. "As a producer and co-writer, I have spent the last 4 years researching and conducting video interviews with artists, songwriters, producers, arrangers, musicians and former employees that were involved in any aspect of Gold Star's existence as a mecca for the music industry from 1950-1984.

"These interviews have advanced both our projects: a music documentary and a theatrical musical stage play.

"In the play, we follow the path of Stan and his partner David Gold reflecting on the creative events and significant moments that allowed the studio to become one of the most successful independent recording studios in the world. Their creativity was recognized and promoted by Phil Spector in his Wall of Sound productions. He selected Gold Star due to its famous echo chamber and engineering techniques that allowed his unique production style to flourish.

"Gold Star was a place where any nationality, race, and faith could feel welcome to record and perform their music in a nurturing and welcome environment.

"The play is being directed by San Diego's Javier Velasco with music direction by Steve Gunderson, both well-known creative resources in the San Diego community.

"Jonathan is a member of The Dramatist organization and is the lead writer/researcher/interviewer on the projects. My role in addition to writing has been to develop relationships with the individuals that were part of Gold Star's history and to oversee business aspects of R & R Productions, LLC."

JONATHAN ROSENBERG IS A NAtive of The Bronx, for 30 plus years Rosenberg, in addition to being a psychologist and teacher, has worked as an entertainment writer, radio personality and a lead singer/songwriter. In 2014, he turned his attention to playwriting

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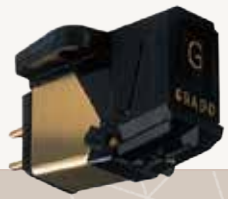

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and broke attendance records at the San Diego Fringe Festival for his musical, *Long Way to Midnight*.

In the coming months, Jonathan will have two World Premiere musicals opening: *33 1/3 - House of Dreams*, and *Americano* (Phoenix Theatre in Arizona). Jonathan received his bachelor's from City College in New York, his Master's from the University of Michigan, and his Doctorate from Alliant University in San Diego.

"What amazed me the most about this project was the reverence the music community still has for Stan Ross," exclaimed Rosenberg. "The fact that Brad was Stan's son opened almost every door we knocked on. Brian Wilson, Bill Medley, Herb Alpert, Richie Furay, Mike Curb, and the Wrecking Crew musicians spent time with us recollecting their many great Gold Star memories.

"At that point, we realized that this was a story that has yet to be told. People don't think of Gold Star Recording Studios in the same way they think of Sun Studios, Motown, or Abbey Road. That's all going to change after they see *33 1/3 - House of Dreams.*"

STAN ROSS ARCHIVES

Larry Levine and Phil Spector, at Gold Star Studios

"It's an amazing story and should be told for the younger generation to follow," volunteered drummer/percussionist Hal Blaine in 2013.

GOLD STAR GARNERED MORE Recording Industry Associ-ation of America (RIAA) *Songs of the Century* and Grammy Hall of Fame winners than any other independent studio in America.

Former Gold Star studio clients included: Herb Alpert & the Tijuana Brass, Sonny & Cher, Buffalo Springfield, Neil Young, Jack Nitzsche, Phil Spector, Shel Talmy, Brian Wilson with The Beach Boys, Kim Fowley, Leonard Cohen, Barry White, The Cascades, Iron Butterfly, The Crystals, The Ronettes, Darlene Love, Cher, Don Ralke, Eddie Cochran, Jerry Capehart, Jackie DeShannon, Bob Dylan, Clydie King, David Briggs, Don Peake, Art Garfunkel, Dick Dale, Johnny Crawford, Bobby Darin, Johnny Burnette, Thee Midniters, The Sunrays, The Rose Garden, Mark and the Escorts, Jon & The Nightriders, and The Dillards.

Ike & Tina Turner, Tim Hardin, The Beau Brummels, The Murmaids, Led Zeppelin, Ronald Reagan, Hoyt Axton, Robin Ward, George Carlin and Jack Burns, Duane Eddy, Maurice Gibb, The Chipmunks, The Sonics, Margie Rayburn, Marlon Brando, The Band, The Cake, The Association, The Runaways, The Go-Gos, The Ramones, The Seeds, The Monkees, The MFQ, The Turtles, Oscar Moore, Gerry Mulligan, Mundell Lowe, Chet Baker, Louis Bellson's big swing band and The Hi-Los utilized the famed location.

During 1962 before Marty Balin founded Jefferson Airplane, he and arranger Jimmie Haskell waxed "I Specialize in Love" at the facility. In 1963, Noel Scott Engel, later known as revered UK musical

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HENRY DILTZ

Buffalo Springfield, at Gold Star Studios, June 1966

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icon Scott Walker, was hired for menial tasks and cut instrumental music and where Jimi Hendrix and Arthur Lee in 1964 teamed on Rosa Lee Brooks' "My Diary" 45 RPM.

Dobie Gray's "The In Crowd," arranged by Al De Lory, Chris Montez's "Let's Dance" and Jackie DeShannon's *Laurel Canyon* were done on the premises.

The Gold Star environment yielded Hugh Masekela's "Grazin' in the Grass, arranger Gene Page's *Blakula* soundtrack and *Star Trek's* William Shatner reciting "Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds."

Cher's first solo hit single, "All I Really Want To Do," written by Bob Dylan, came from Gold Star, alongside her albums with Sony Bono, as well as Sonny's own outing "Laugh At Me."

In my 2009 book, *Canyon of Dreams: The Magic and the Music of Laurel Canyon*, the multi-instrumentalist Randy Sterling described the studio scenario around Cher's "All I Really Want To Do," even playing a pivotal role in ensuring it got on tape in the first place.

"We had finished the basic track and, in the hallway that led out to the back alley at Gold Star, Cher was standing there alone with her hands on her hips. She was about to record to record her lead vocal and was alone. She turned around and almost had tears in her eyes. 'Oh Randy, I just don't know if I can do this.'

"I gave Cher a big hug and said. 'Honey, you're the best. This is nothing. This is easy and it's your song. And it's gonna be a big hit.' I gave her a pep talk. 'You haven't sung it yet and I know it's gonna be a big hit. Get in there and do what you do and it will be fine.'

"She walked back into the studio, did it, and knocked it out of the ball park in one take. When we were doing it I knew it was good. I hung out with Sonny & Cher a lot when they were based out of Laurel Canyon."

At this temple of sound Don & Dewey's "Jungle Hop" introduced the electronically distorted guitar while Phil Spector's production of "Zip A Dee Do Dah" by Bob B. Soxx & The Blue Jeans was the first distorted lead guitar on a hit record.

Gold Star also developed phasing, DT (Double-tracking) and flanging techniques.Gold, Ross and engineer Larry Levine integrated the concept of phase-shifting or "phasing" a sweeping effect that incorporated electronic music on their hit disc "The Big Hurt" by the vocalist Toni Fisher.

In 2015, the legacy of Gold Star was depicted in a documentary, *The Wrecking Crew* by filmmaker Denny Tedesco, son of guitarist and studio musician, Tommy Tedesco.

This decade, Brian Wilson, Herb Alpert, Richie Furay, Mike Curb, Chris Montez, Kim Fowley, Nino Tempo, Bill Medley, Richard Sherman, Donna Loren, Jon Blair, Marky Ramone, Brian Stone, Carol Connors, Mark Guerrero, Lyle Ritz, Carol Kaye, Johnette Napolitano, Don Randi, Don Peake, David Kessel, Steven Van Zandt and myself were filmed for the documentary about Gold Star and co-owner/engineer Stan Ross directed and produced by Jonathan Rosenberg and Stan's son, Brad Ross.

In every book and story about the life of Phil Spector, Stan Ross is mentioned along with Dave Gold, and Larry Levine. They collectively toiled for years in Gold Star, made overt and subtle sound design contributions to Phil Spector's studio undertakings while jointly constructing the "Wall of Sound."

Gold Star and Spector were a special force of destination. The alchemy of geography, Ross, Gold and Levine's technical acumen combined with Spector's stylistic confidence

Dave Gold hails from the Boyle Heights section of East Los Angeles California.

Ross, born in Brooklyn, New York in 1928, moved with his parents to Los Angeles at age 15. Stan then enrolled at Los Angeles' Fairfax High and graduated in 1946. Stan wrote a music column in the *Fairfax Colonial Gazette* called *Musical Downbeat* and his reporter scoops were bannered *Off the Record*.

When he was a teenager, Ross studied

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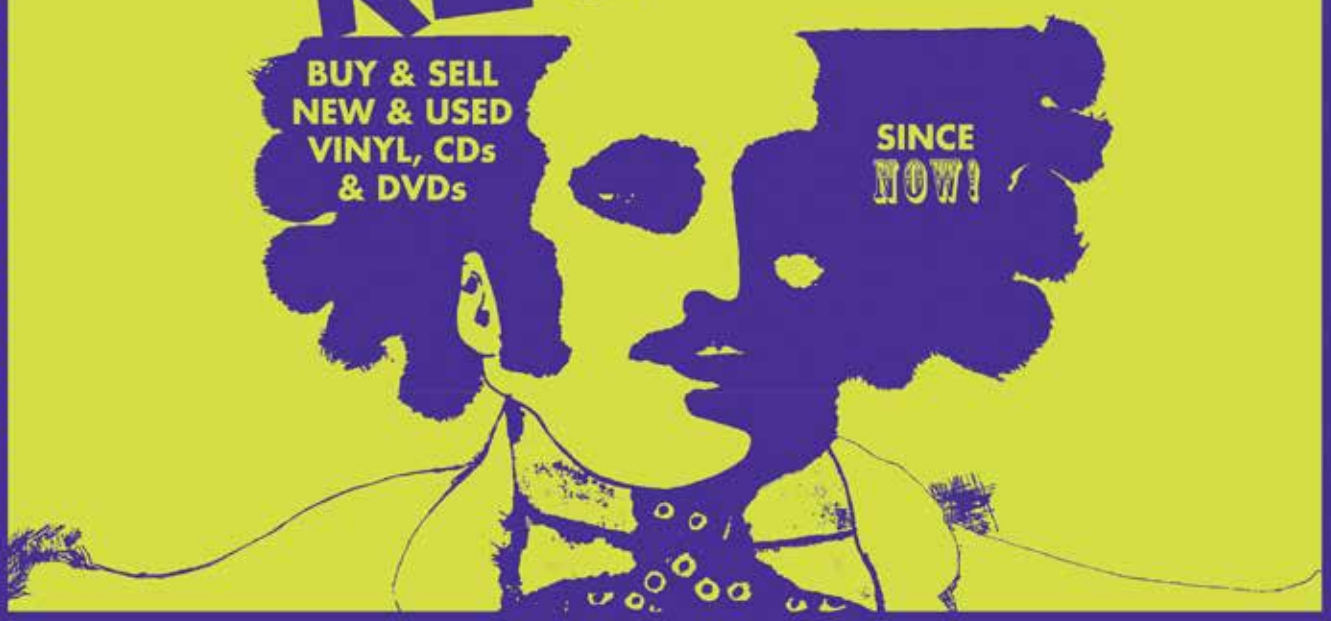

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recording from a pioneer of modern disc recording Bert B. Gottschalk. Stan worked at his Electro-Vox studio for four years as an engineer and was responsible for one hit record, "Deck of Cards" by T. Texas Tyler.

"Gold Star used to be a dentist's office," Stan Ross reminded me in a 2001 interview we conducted. "We started pulling teeth a different way."

Gold Star was built in 1950 and lasted until 1984 at 6252 Santa Monica Blvd until a fire destroyed the property in March 1984.

"Gold Star was built for the songwriters. They were fun, wonderful people to be around: Jimmy Van Heusen, Bobby Troup, Bob and Richard Sherman, Sammy Fain, Sonny Burke, Don Robertson, Johnny Mercer, Jimmy McHugh, Frank Loesser, Dimitri Tiomkin. We did song demos, voice-over work, radio and TV jingles," reminisced Ross.

"I loved music, and I was a record buyer, and I know what I liked. If I'm going to buy a record, I want it to sound like this. So I made everything I got involved with like something I would buy.

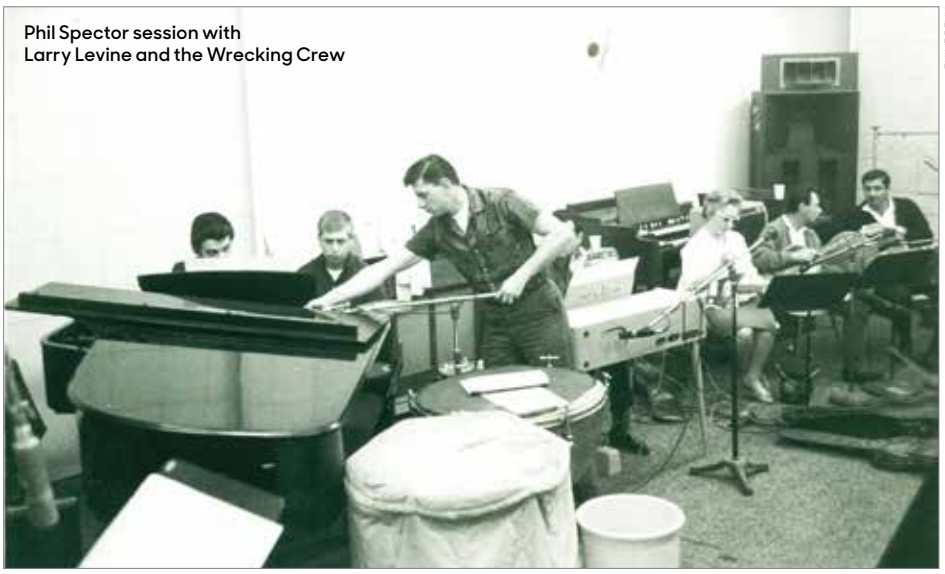
"Our studio echo chamber gave it the wall of sound feel. Dave (Gold) built the equipment and echo chamber and personally hand-crafted the acoustical wall coating. We had so much fun with that echo chamber; it never sounded the same way twice. Gold Star brought a feeling, an emotional feeling.

"The soundboard was all tubes. And when you have tubes, you have expansion and it doesn't distort so easy. We kept tubes on longer than anyone else. Because we understood that when a kick drum kicks into a tube it's not gonna distort. A tube can expand.

"The microphones with tubes were better than the ones without the tubes because if you don't have a tube and you hit heavy, suddenly it breaks ups. But when you have a tube it's warm and emotional. It gets bigger and it expands. It allows for the impulse," underscored Ross.

"Gold Star brought a feeling, an emotional feeling. I've been in other studios that were 'too hot,' 'too lively.' Some that sounded like cardboard boxes. 'Too dead.'

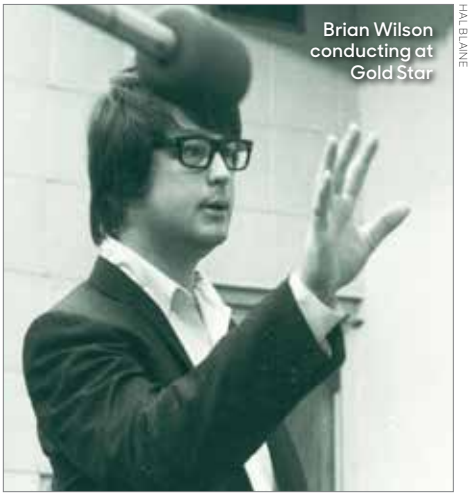
"Gold Star had enough echo that if you snapped your fingers, or clapped your hands, you could actually hear it. So if that's the way your hands clapped, then your drum sound would be the same kind of feel.Our echo chamber gave it the 'Wall of Sound' feel. It was smaller than most people knew."


Phil Spector session with Larry Levine and the Wrecking Crew

HAL BLAINE

Stephen Stills, at Gold Star Studios, June 1966

HENRY DILTZ


Brian Wilson conducting at Gold Star

HAL BLAINE

Stan was behind the console for Phil Spector on his 1958 Teddy Bear's recording, "To Know Him Is To Love Him" and subsequent Spector bookings at Gold Star 1962-1966.

The history and mystery of Gold Star and previous clients in the fifties were not lost on teenage Spector when he knocked on their magical entry door.

"Phil followed in a studio tradition," reinforced Stan. "We used Studio A. Eddie Cochran used our Studio B. Down the stairs by the parking lot. I cut 'Tequila' there by The Champs.

"I did a whole lot of Eddie Cochran's records including 'Summertime Blues,' '20 Flight Rock,' and 'C'mon Everybody.' The vocal of Ritchie Valens' 'Oh Donna' was recorded at Gold Star. The backing track was done up the street at Bob Keene's studio who owned Del-Fi Records."

"Phil served the song. He worked for the tape. He knew what he could get away with and what he couldn't and he appreciated whatever suggestions Larry or myself would give him. He never closed his mind to anything. He was always open-minded. He was very emotional about his records."

Larry Levine, Ross' cousin, who also attended Fairfax High School, was one of the house engineers at Gold Star and a crucial component in Spector's "Wall of Sound" audio endeavors.

Levine won a 1966 Grammy Award for Best Engineered Recording-Non Classical, for his work on "A Taste of Honey" performed by Herb Alpert & the Tijuana Brass.

Larry engineered albums for Eddie

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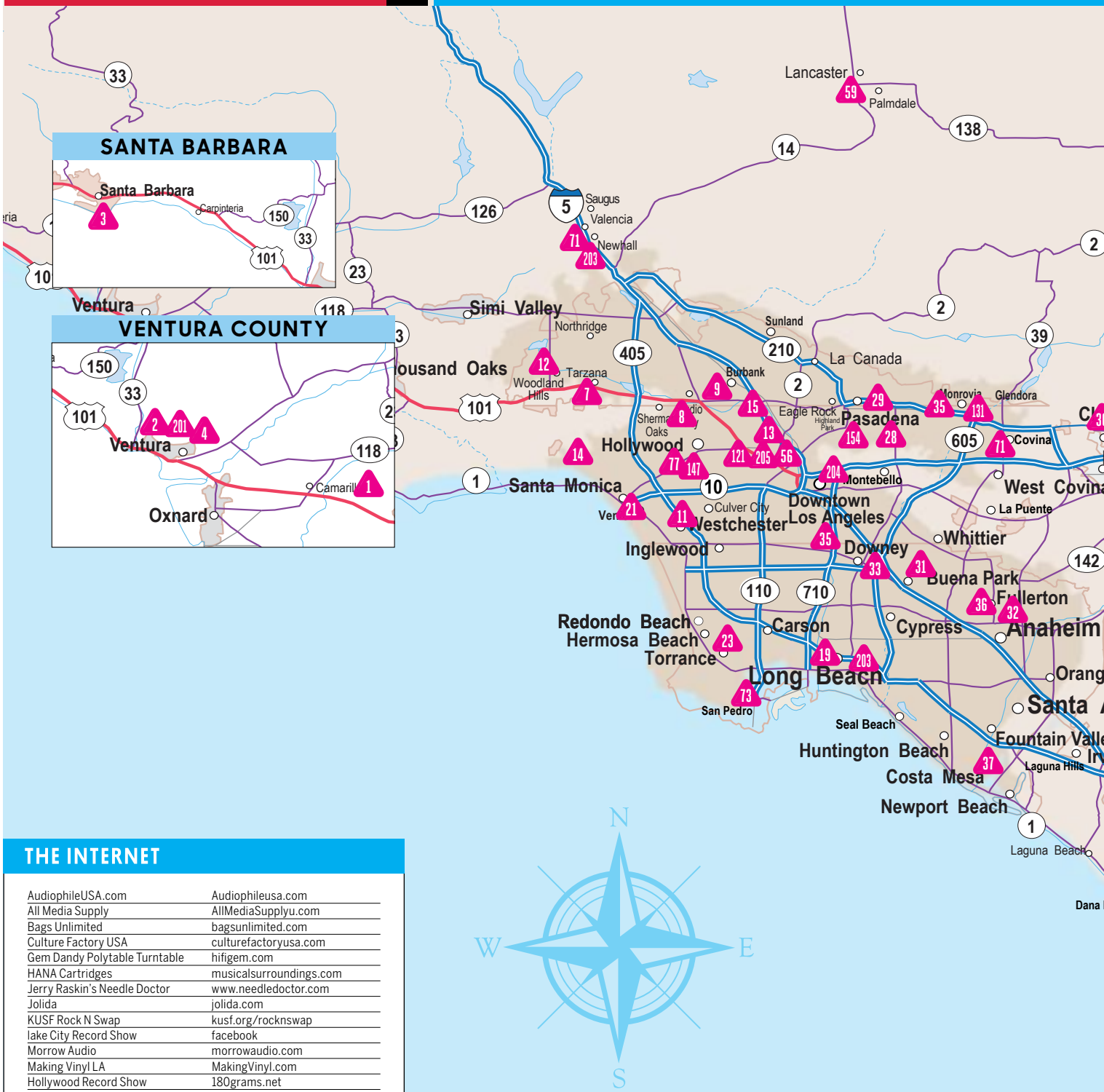

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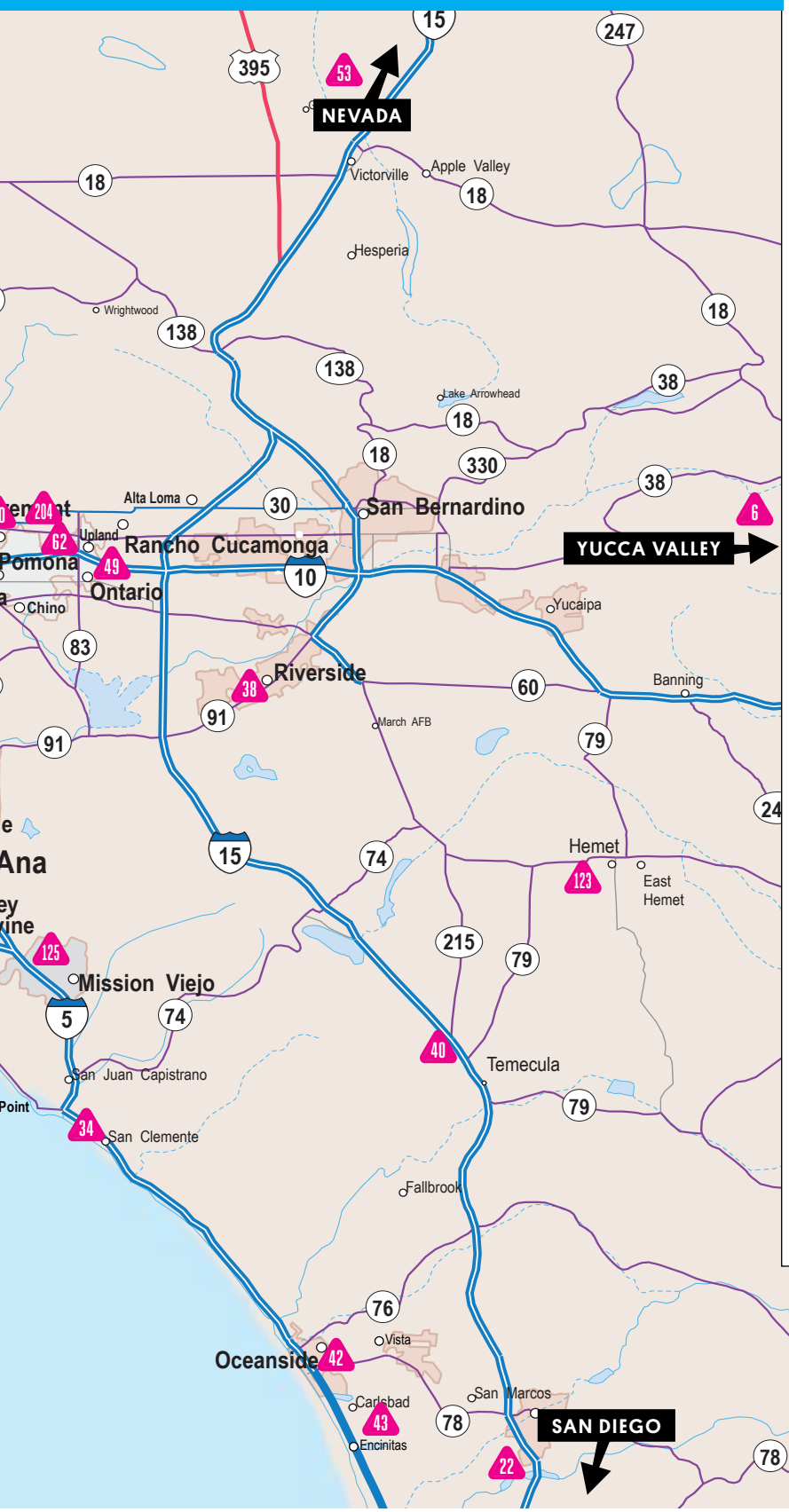

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131	Brooks Berdan	110 W Olive	Monrovia	91016
29	Audio Element	117 E Union St	Pasadena	91103

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30	Rhino Records	235 Yale Ave	Claremont	91711
62	Penny Lane Records	235 E 9th Street	Upland	91786
204	Upscale Audio	2058 Wright Ave	La Verne	91750

ORANGE COUNTY

31	Greater Orange County Record Show	8530 Stanton	Buena Park	90620
32	Burger Records	645a S. State College Blvd.	Fullerton	92831
33	Far West Record Supply	SEE OC Record Show	Buena Park	90620
34	Moldy Toes Records	217 S. El Camino Real	San Clemente	92672
36	Black Hole Records	115 S Harbor Blvd.	Fullerton	92832
37	Factory Records	440 E 17th Street	Costa Mesa	92627

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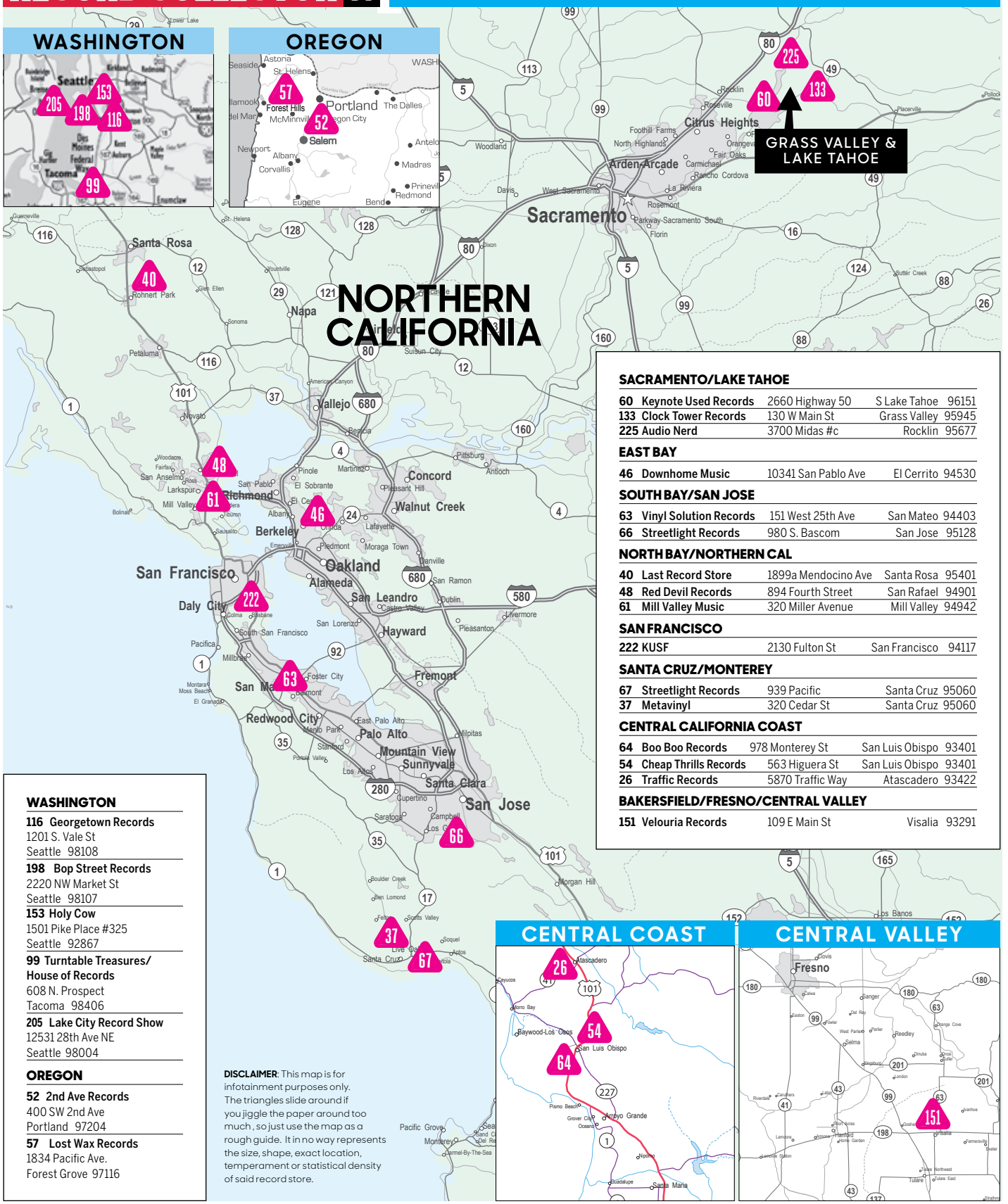
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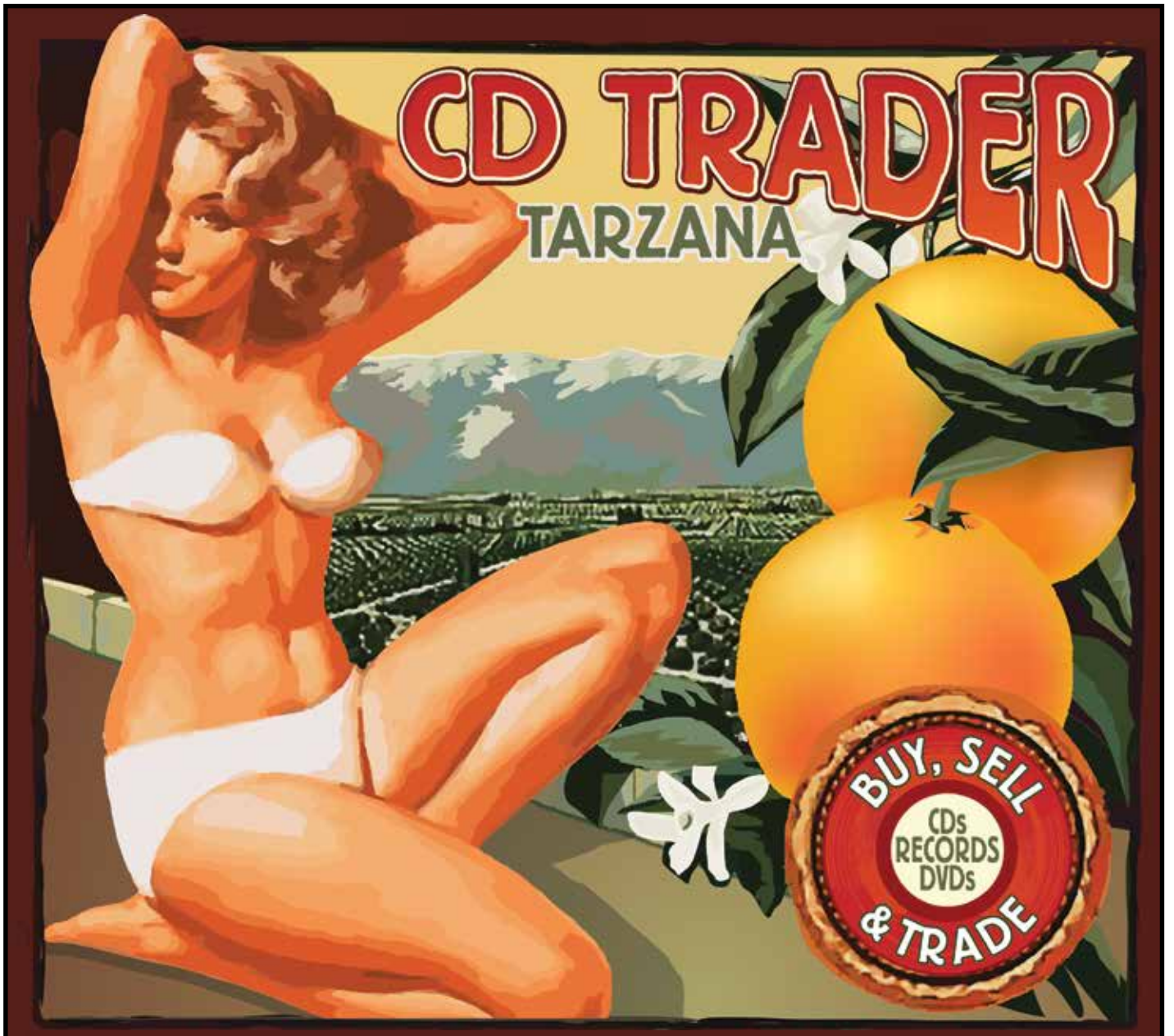

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Cochran, The Beach Boys, Sonny and Cher, Herb Alpert & the Tijuana Brass, The Carpenters, Dr. John, and with Spector in the late 70s albums by Leonard Cohen and The Ramones. He engineered The Ramones' *End Of The Century,* with Boris Menart and assisted by Bruce Gold.

"As a matter of fact," mentioned Levine in a 2002 interview, "Phil once said to me the bane of his recording existence was the drum sound. A lot of people attribute to echo to what Phil was doing. The echo enhanced the melding of the 'Wall of Sound,' but it didn't create it. Within the room itself, all of this was happening and the echo was glue that kept it together," offered Larry, who passed away in 2008.

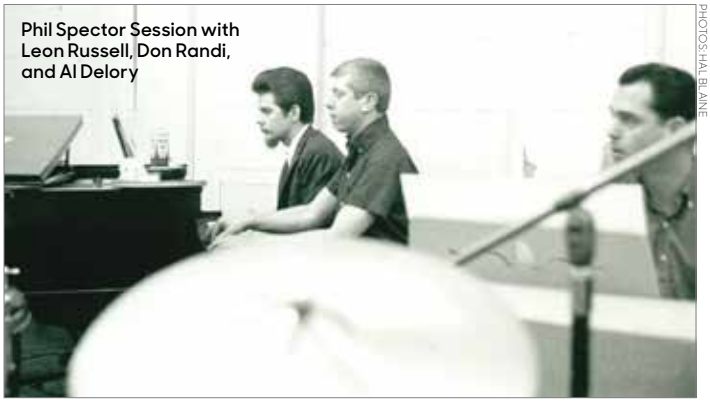
"As far as the room sound and the drum sound went, because the rooms were small, with low ceilings, the drum sound, unlike other studios with isolation, your drums sounded the way you wanted them to sound. They would change accordingly to whatever leakage was involved.

"The best producers are people who know what they want and know how to communicate so that all of us can strive towards their goal, while the producer is still amenable to something else that may happen along the way. In my career, I've worked with three great producers—Phil Spector, Herb Alpert, and Brian Wilson."

"Let me tell you a story," Brian Wilson divulged in a 2007 interview. "I went to Gold Star and asked Larry Levine, the engineer, 'What is the secret of the Phil Spector echo trip?' And Larry replied, 'Well, we have two echo chambers under the parking lot. Phil uses both the chambers at the same time.' So I tried that myself and it worked.

"I also wanted to know from Larry what Phil Spector did with his basses. Larry said, 'Phil uses a standup and a Fender both at the same time. And the Fender guy used a pick.'

"So I tried it out at my session and it worked great! You also get a thicker sound putting the two basses together. I start with drums, bass, guitar and keyboards. Then we overdub the horns and the background voices."



Phil Spector Session with Leon Russell, Don Randi, and Al Delory

PHOTOS: HAL BLAINE

Barbara Eden and Hal Blaine at Gold Star

Don Randi played piano, keyboards, and organ on every Spector-produced/Jack Nitzsche-arranged activity at Gold Star since 1962. In addition, Randi can be heard on the Beach Boys' album *Pet Sounds*, *Buffalo Springfield Again*, Love's *Forever Changes* and *The '68 Elvis Presley Comeback Special*. Randi's resume displays *The Birds, The Bees & The Monkees,* Tim Buckley's *Goodbye & Hello* and Frank and Nancy Sinatra.

"Gold Star was an incredible place since the first time I ever worked there," stressed Don.

"It was friendly. And they always had a good staff there that was friendly. Between Dave Gold, Stan Ross and Larry Levine, and Doc Siegel, it was great and fun. I worked a lot with Stan and Larry. Doc Siegel got destined to do the 'B' sides for Phil Spector.

"Everybody playing parts and a lot of time duplication. Like on the pianos, you would have one guy doing a thing on the high end of the piano, somebody in the middle, and Phil would want the different sounds of a concert grand, and an upright, electric or a Wurlitzer. So he liked to have the spread of the different tonality. That was Phil. He understood tonality very well. And at Gold Star it was magic because of all those harmonics rising were part of the wall of sound.

"The studio can make a difference in the sound of a record. At Gold Star it was the echo chamber. Like, when someone talks about a guy being a 'natural baseball player.' Gold Star was a natural studio. It just blended and worked. When you went to Gold Star you just knew you were making a hit record. Jack Nitzsche was a good translator for Phil.

"As far as the music recorded and documented in Gold Star, it was because musically and lyrically and the composition and note part was brilliant. There were always great songs. The songs always told a story. The songs in themselves were films. And, especially in Phil's case, he knew how to write them and how to produce them. And in Brian Wilson's case, Brian always knew where he was going with it. He may have not known at the beginning, but after a while he had an idea and he developed it. We were there to help him develop it," concluded Randi.

The epic song River Deep, Mountain High," written by Jeff Barry, Ellie Greenwich and Spector, and covered by dozens of recording artists was initially arranged by Jack Nitzsche and produced by Spector on Ike & Tina Turner at Gold Star.

"Phil Spector helped write 'River Deep, Mountain High' and said, 'I've got a song for Tina,'" Jack Nitzsche told me in a 1988 interview. "I went over to Phil's house and went over the arrangement note by note. When Phil played me it on the piano I knew it was a great song.

"We did the rhythm track in two different three-hour sessions. Even during the cutting of the track, when she was putting on a scratch

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Stan Ross at the board at Gold Star Studios

STAN ROSS ARCHIVES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28

vocal, Tina was singing along as we cut it. Oh, man, she was great, doing a rough, scratch vocal as the musicians really kicked the rhythm section in the ass."

Brian Wilson, Dennis Hopper, Mick Jagger and Rodney Bingenheimer were in attendance when it was created. The 1966 45 RPM was released initially on Spector's Philles Records label.

The tune is spotlighted in *33 1/3-House of Dreams*.

In 1975 I interviewed Tina Turner for *Melody Maker* about this sonic revolution done without auto-tune assistance.

"'River Deep, Mountain High" was a smash in England," recalled Tina. "The biggest change started happening when we were working around L.A. in 1966 and ran into Phil Spector. He wanted to record me and when we cut 'River Deep, Mountain High' Mick Jagger, who was visiting Phil at the time, was in the studio. After hearing the song he wanted us to tour England in 1966 with the Rolling Stones.

"River Deep, Mountain High" only reached number 88 in the U.S. *Billboard* singles chart, but a number 3 position in the UK market. John Lennon called "River Deep, Mountain High" a "masterpiece." George Harrison provided a front jacket blurb on the Spector produced Ike & Tina Turner *River Deep, Mountain High* album: "It is a perfect record from start to finish. You couldn't improve on it."

As a teenager, Rodney Bingenheimer, now a Sirius XM deejay on Little Steven's *Underground Garage* channel was a Gold Star invited guest attending countless Buffalo Springfield, Iron Butterfly, Dr. John, and Sonny & Cher sessions at the studio.

Rodney also went to Gold Star with Jimi Hendrix when The Cake was doing their debut album, driving down from Monkees' Peter Tork's house in the Laurel Canyon region while cruising in Jimi's powder blue Corvette Sting Ray.

"I loved Gold Star," proclaimed Bingenheimer. "I played one of the tambourines on Sonny & Cher's 'Bang Bang (My Baby Shot Me Down).' I took my mother Marian to one of their sessions, 'It's The Little Things' on the *Good Times* album soundtrack. I was later at all the Ramones' sessions at Gold Star that Phil Spector produced."

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Buffalo Springfield recorded their debut album *Buffalo Springfield* at Gold Star. Doc Siegel engineered it with Tom May, produced by Charlie Greene and Brian Stone.

Richie Furay, a Buffalo Springfield co-founder, is still in awe discussing Gold Star.

"Look, walking into Gold Star studio. I'm a young kid from Ohio," marveled Furay in a 2001 interview. "And to go in that studio, with all the history, and hear our music coming through those speakers, even though it's a four-track machine, was bigger than life."

Multi-instrumentalist David Kessel is currently CEO of Cave Hollywood. (cavehollywood.com) He is also a member of the band Willapa. David is the son of influential jazz guitarist and record producer, Barney Kessel, who can be heard on dozens of jazz, pop and rock 'n' roll recordings and was a member of the Wrecking Crew.

"I knew my dad as a record producer (Fred Astaire, Audrey Hepburn, Ricky Nelson), not just a guitarist," reflected Kessel. David's stepmother B.J. Baker was also a pivotal architect of classic pop and rock records from the late 1950s through the 1980s and considered one of the top background singers and vocal contractors of her era collaborating with Elvis Presley, The Crystals, Frank Sinatra, Jackie Wilson, Lloyd Price, Brian Hyland, Bobby Vee, Timi Yuro, and Sam Cooke. "She taught me a lot about how vocals should be recorded," emphasized Kessel.

As a teenager growing up in Southern California, David, along with older brother Dan attended recording dates of The Beach Boys, Phil Spector, Quincy Jones, and Sonny & Cher.

"Phil taught me how to take charge of my vision, and how to take responsibility for achieving that vision," underlined David.

"I grew up going to Phil Spector and Sonny & Cher sessions at Gold Star Studios in Hollywood. My dad Barney would bring me and my brother Dan to the studio. It really was kind of normal progression, which was not on the plan at the time, that we became the only 2nd generation Wrecking Crew members.

"In the seventies we played regularly on records for Phil at Gold Star, from being on Dion, Leonard Cohen and The Ramones' *End of the Century* there, and doing our own projects.

"The vibe was the best from all the studios in town. Gold Star always felt like home. It captured that vibe with sound and song in a way that nobody has or will again."

In 2010 I asked Kessel about the Gold Star world he saw in the sixties and later in the seventies when he recorded there.

"Because the total acoustics of the room for a Wall of Sound experience were just perfect. And the way that Dave Gold and Stan Ross designed the studio, they knew what they were doing. It's not like they said, 'Let's roll a wall up

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34

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here.' They really had their acoustics down very early in the game.

"Of course the echo chambers and their board that was a heavy metal board, and I don't mean like in heavy metal music. It was because of the quality of the metal inside the console board and the wiring. It was very thick and very powerful.

"Not like today where you have all the digital stuff and then you have to bring in all the boxes and try to beef it up. You know what I mean? Where at Gold Star that was the real deal.

"The metals made after World War II were sufficiently degraded from the metals before World War II, much weaker metal because they had to use so much during the war.

"It became thinner, got into aluminum, transistors. Stuff like that," theorized Kessel. "When they have the real deal metal, the real deal magnets, and the real deal wiring, that really enhances the sound.

"And when you bring in brilliant acoustics with a powerful board and then you have Phil and his genius working the musicians and hearing those sounds in his head and being able to articulate it with the help of Larry Levine, Stan Ross and Dave Gold who were outstanding.

"Gold Star was a special unique studio and so were the guys who ran it," summarized David.

Harvey Kubernik is an author of 16 books. Kubernik's *The Doors Summer's Gone* was published by Other World Cottage Industries and just nominated for the 2019 Association for Recorded Sound Collections Awards for Excellence in Historical Recorded Sound Research.

His anthology *Inside Cave Hollywood: The Harvey Kubernik Music InnerViews and InterViews Collection Vol. 1*, was published by Cave Hollywood.

In December 2018, Sterling/Barnes and Noble published Kubernik's *The Story of The Band From Big Pink to the Last Waltz*. Harvey penned the liner note booklets to the CD re-releases of Carole King's *Tapestry*, *Elvis Presley The '68 Comeback Special*, Allen Ginsberg's *Kaddish*, and the Ramones' *End of the Century*.

Kubernik was also an occasional food runner and provided percussion instruments and handclaps on a handful of Phil Spector-produced recording sessions at Gold Star. His album credits include The Ramones' *End Of The Century* and The Paley Brothers' *Baby, Let's Stick Together*. Harvey also participated on Leonard Cohen's *Death of a Ladies' Man*. In 1982 Kubernik eventually produced a recording session at Gold Star.

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7. Be My Baby
8. Da Doo Run Run
9. River Deep, Mountain High
10. This Guy's in Love With You
11. It Was a Very Good Year
12. Let's Dance
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Miles Davis, Real Cool

The 70th anniversary of the *Birth of the Cool* sessions is being celebrated with a new vinyl and CD collection and a documentary

BY HARVEY KUBERNIK

In 1949, Miles Davis was a determined 22-year-old – *Birth of the Cool* saw him helm a creative project for the first time

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SEVENTY YEARS AGO, IN A NONdescript basement room behind a Chinese laundry in midtown Manhattan, a group of like-minded jazz modernists formed a groundbreaking collective. Among them were jazz headliners soon-to-be: Gerry Mulligan, Lee Konitz, Max Roach, John Lewis, the arranger Gil Evans and significantly, the 22-year-old trumpeter Miles Davis, who became the leader of the project. The music this historic nine-piece group created together in 1949 and 1950 — in the studio and onstage — came and went with little notice at first. Seven years later, when the music was collected on a full LP for the first time, the world came to understand its impact: a true watershed moment in postwar music, dubbed with the name that remains one of the best known in modern jazz: *Birth of the Cool.*

This past June Blue Note/UMe, *The Complete Birth of the Cool* chronicled the brief yet monumental importance of the Miles Davis Nonet. Honoring the 70th anniversary of the initial *Birth of the Cool* sessions, *The Complete Birth of the Cool* presents together *all* the music created by this collective.

Available in 2LP vinyl, CD, and digital formats, the collection includes the twelve sides they recorded in 1949/'50, as well as the ensemble's only extant live recordings, recorded at the Royal Roost. The new release marks the first time since 1957 that the recordings have been remastered for vinyl and the first time all the *Birth of the Cool* performances — studio and live — are available together on LP.

The Complete Birth of the Cool stands as an important reminder of the enduring stature of trumpeter Miles Davis, whose career famously shifted from one phase to the next, serving a Pied Piper role each time his intrepid musical spirit brought on a change. In 1949, Davis was a determined 22-year-old — *Birth of the Cool* saw him helm a creative project for the first time, his name in the titular spot, assuming bandleader duties: calling rehearsals, booking gigs. In one sense, the music turned him away from the small-band, unfettered energy of bebop— the style founded by Charlie "Bird" Parker and Dizzy Gillespie which first drew him to New York City. In another, *Birth of the Cool* was Davis' (and the group's) determined attempt to mutate the language of bebop, mixing with a wider palette of sounds and sophistication.

The seeds of *Birth of the Cool* were planted in the Manhattan basement apartment of the arranger/composer Gil Evans, who hosted informal musical meetings in which ideas about arranging, jazz, and classical music were shared and explored among a younger generation of musicians. The meeting of Evans and Davis in this humble location led not only to the triumph of *Birth of the Cool*, but predicted future collaborations, as well, for albums that are regarded as cornerstones of modern jazz— *Miles Ahead*, *Porgy and Bess*, and *Sketches of Spain*.

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The 2LP vinyl and CD packages include a booklet filled with archival photographs and an extensive new essay by GRAMMY®-winning American music historian Ashley Kahn.

The cross-racial and intergenerational friendship of Miles Davis and Gil Evans is one of the stories told in Kahn's *The Complete Birth of the Cool* liner notes essay, as well as the big band leader/pianist Claude Thornhill and his role as a source-point to *Birth of the Cool*.

Also explored is the perceptive support of Capitol Records producer Pete Rugolo, who recorded the group initially, and who in 1957 oversaw the album's reissue and was credited for coming up with the title *Birth of the Cool*. The importance of Davis' fellow soloist, alto saxophonist Lee Konitz is also covered in the essay, with new comments from the jazz legend.

The Complete Birth of the Cool is an invitation to understand the music within the context it was born. To the ears of music fans in 1949, the sound of *Birth of the Cool* was as entrancing as it was strange: intricate in its big band arrangements, but with solos and rhythm section breathing the fire of bebop. There's the flavor of modern classical music on some ensemble passages, and at times musical devices— like counterpoint— one would not expect to hear in popular music of the day.

Birth of the Cool was music that focused on arrangements— the Miles Davis Nonet began as an arranger's band. Even though different composers and arrangers created the music (Gil Evans, Gerry Mulligan, John Lewis, John Carisi), *Birth of the Cool* has a remarkably consistent sound. It's about a collective, not an individual.

In fact, as jazz historian Dan Morgenstern writes, "There can be little doubt that these records triggered the advent of a successor style to bebop."

Yet, as one record producer asserted, *Birth of the Cool* was the sound of arguably the most important voice in modern jazz reaching its first stage of maturity.

As one record producer said, *Birth of the Cool* was the sound of, arguably, the most important voice in modern jazz reaching its first stage of maturity.

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"Here was a chance for all his sensitivity, compared to Bird's savageness and deep fire and emotion," said Bob Weinstock, founder of Prestige Records. "Here was an outlet for Miles Davis to let out the sensitivity that he had as a musician."

The *Birth of the Cool* story is about beginnings and debuts. Miles was coming out of playing with Bird, frenetic bebop and conjures with Evans, Mulligan, Carisi and others this almost radical sound tapestry where the soloist takes a backseat to the "virtuosity" of the arrangements.

Davis' approach is almost always referred to as "cool" yet he defined his sound as light and floating, as opposed to the "West Coast" cool sound of hard bop played by a lot of former big band soloists. Instrumental participants and collaborators on *Birth of the Cool* sessions would subsequently birth their own jazz ideas into a post-bop world in the decades that followed.

Asked about the *Birth of the Cool* title, Miles Davis once said: "I think what they really meant was a soft sound. Not penetrating too much. To play soft you have to relax..." He later added in his autobiography, "*Birth [of the Cool]* was not only hummable but it had white people playing the music and serving in prominent roles...we shook people's ears a little softer than Bird or Diz did, took the music more mainstream."

Also due this fall in North American movie screens is a new documentary *Miles Davis: Birth of the Cool* featuring never-before-seen archival footage, studio outtakes, and rare photos.

Directed by acclaimed filmmaker and Emmy-Award winner Stanley Nelson, produced by Nelson and Nicole London, it's a venture

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Miles Davis: Birth of the Cool tells the story of a truly singular talent and unpacks the man behind the horn. The life and career of musical giant and cultural icon Miles Davis, a true visionary, innovator and originator who defied categorization and embodied the word: *cool*.

In June 2019 I discussed the album *Birth of the Cool* and the upcoming documentary *Miles Davis: Birth of the Cool* with Vince Wilburn, Jr., nephew of Miles Davis, and Erin Davis, the son of Miles Davis.

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After Miles Davis died on September 28, 1991, Wilburn, along with Erin Davis and his sister Cheryl jointly began to oversee on behalf of the Miles Davis estate musical endeavors and all aspects of his catalog and brand.

"I think *Birth of the Cool* is an overlooked period, an overlooked piece of music that should be re-visited. I think by Universal reissuing this record it's like waxing a beautiful car that you've owned for years," suggests Wilburn.

"Uncle Miles never discussed the album with me and never wanted to think about or talk about the music he recorded in the past. It was about what we were doing now, at the time and in the future," underlined Vince.

"I had a quintet cassette that I used to listen too when we had Walkmans and he used to hear me play it in the car together going to airports and on tour. One day he said, 'give me that cassette,' like he wanted to hear it. So I gave it to him or loaned it to him, whatever, and never got it back. (laughs). Either he was gonna listen to it or he didn't want me to listening to it, because we were trying to move the band forward and he never mentioned *Birth of the Cool*."

The *BOTC* album was the first project Miles Davis worked with arranger Gil Evans on. I asked Vince about the Davis and Evans relationship.

"When uncle Miles flew up to New York to record *Man with the Horn*, that was 1979 and Gil used to come by 30th street and just chill in the corner. Uncle Miles would go over and whisper to him about certain things he heard.

"To witness that friendship and that brotherhood. I wasn't privy to the conversations, you know. They would talk about the music. The structure of the music. Gil was very gentle and soft-spoken. Very organic and cool.

"There was a tour in 1983 of Miles and Gil in Japan. And Al Foster was playing drums but I had the privilege of travelling with uncle Miles during that time, and that was cool to see them hang out in Japan."

I also asked musician and producer Wilburn about preparing projects from the influential Miles Davis tape catalog.

"Visiting the tape vaults is like the sacred scrolls," he admits. "It's exciting. I never get tired of it. It's like lost treasures. Look, I'm a sensitive cat and I live in the future and I live in the past and I live in today. So I have the best of all worlds," he underscores. "And when I go into those vaults and when I talk to musicians or when I play with musicians. I just played with Ron Carter. I mean, this is like my DNA. It's part of who I am.

"It's part of me, you know. And so when I visit those vaults and when I look at those tapes and when I just read 'em or touch them, or the casings, it's like a blessing. And, Harvey dig this, I still get excited about it. I still get that rush. And I still get that 'Man, I can't wait for the public to hear this or that.'

"I came across uncle Miles playing 'Natural Woman' that Aretha sang. 1968. Man, the way he sounded was clear and beautiful. I wish we could put that out. So, there is always something like a gem you find and you want to share with the public," he confesses.

"Erin to me is like the little brother I never had. You know what I mean? When I lived with him and Uncle Miles out in Malibu, Erin had his drum set up in his room playing to all this hard rock, Metallica, jamming out. Right? And I would ask 'Hey Erin. Who is that you just played?' And uncle Miles would ask him the

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same thing. And that was like 1986, 1987."

"You know it's really this great honor just to be able to do it and have the conversation about the 70th anniversary of *Birth of the Cool*, offers musician and producer Erin Davis.

"It falls to Vince and I and Cheryl and others that we work with. Universal has great people who we worked with on this project, a lot of younger people. Some we knew or were introduced too, and guys who have been around for a while.

"Sony has a big portion of the catalog and it's great to also work with Universal on stuff. It's nice when we can work with Concord on their stuff as they have the Prestige catalog. It's great to see them put things out.

"I like releasing things out that people haven't heard. Sure you have the basis for the record, but I like to hear things that they've recorded but never used. Not only like outtakes all the time. I mean like live stuff, some things that give insight into what was going on at that time."

I also discussed the *Miles Davis: Birth of the Cool* documentary with Vince and Erin.

"We've been meeting with [director and producer] Stanley Nelson trying to work this out for years and it came back around," explained Wilburn. "And we [Erin and Cheryl Davis] felt Stanley was a great fit. I think it captures the vulnerability, the sensitivity, and not sugar coated. Miles was nor a choir boy. This is from real family members, past relationships with Frances Taylor Davis, Corky McCoy, who was like a brother to Uncle Miles, Erin's mom, various musicians, and Mark Rothbaum, his former manager, who now manages Willie Nelson. Very proud of it."

"It really gives you quite a perspective of the width and breath of his musical career," Erin emphasizes. "So like his trajectory over different types of music, different eras, present events and technology. And I like watching him progress through that with all his different band mates in a kind of somewhat linear way. Just to see how he was evolving, changing and how he has to bring in new people. He had a thing of he really loved people like 'Trane, but at some point they had to move on. And at some point, Herbie [Hancock] moved on, and Tony Williams and Ron Carter.

"It's really special to see somebody moving through all those different time periods and moving into electric instruments and moving on beyond that. It was kind of cool just to see it all kind of like rolled out in that fashion."

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The Resurgence of Dexter Gordon

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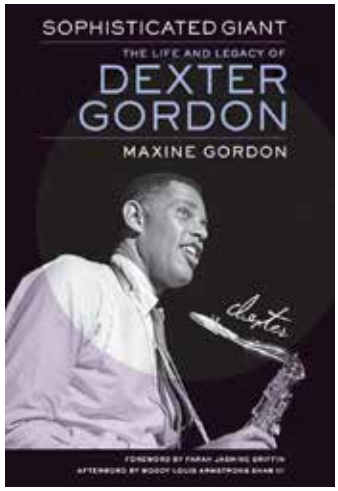

FOR A MUSICIAN WHO passed away in 1990, Dexter Gordon has been extremely busy lately. 2018 saw the release of not only a new biography, but multiple LPs and CDs of previously unreleased material – a series of releases which has continued into 2019.

The biography *Sophisticated Giant – The Life and Legacy of Dexter Gordon* (University of California Press) was written by his widow Maxine Gordon, who also worked as his manager from the mid-1970s forward. The book is predominantly a memoir of both Maxine's time with Gordon and her efforts researching Gordon's early years in America and his years in Europe. It does include snippets from a proposed autobiography written by Dexter himself as well as anecdotes from those around him in his later music and film careers.

Like most musicians of his generation, Gordon got his start in the big bands. In his case, Lionel Hampton took on the seventeen-year-old tenor player from 1940 through 1943. Other stints with big bands followed including brief stays with Fletcher Henderson and even Louis Armstrong. By the mid 1940's, Dexter, only in his early twenties, came home to Los Angeles and became a fixture in the Central Avenue scene.

By 1962, Dexter Gordon had moved to Europe where he would reside until 1976. While in Europe, Gordon would make occasional return trips to play clubs or to record for the Blue Note and later Prestige labels. Over the years, a number of European live recordings of Gordon have surfaced, including the 2018 release *In The Cave: Live At Persepolis Utrecht 1963* (Dutch Jazz Archives). Featuring Gordon with a local piano trio, the set consists mostly of the standards Gordon loved to play, including one he would return to repeatedly, the Billie Holiday classic "Body & Soul."

2018 also saw the re-release of *Jazz At Highschool* (Storyville). Recorded live by Danish National Radio at a Swedish high school in 1967, the set features Gordon along with possibly his best rhythm section: pianist Kenny Drew, bassist Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen and drummer Al Heath. The Gordon compositions "Soy Califa" and "Society Red" highlight a strong program of standards, blues and ballads that formed

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Calendar listings are free and printed on a space available basis. Unsolicited materials cannot be returned. Please contact conventions to verify the information! Send your calendar listings to ***Record Collector News****: jim@recordcollectornews.com*

SUNDAY JUNE 30

Buena Park, CA. Greater Orange County Record Show. UFCW Union Hall – 8530 Stanton Ave. $3. 10am-3pm. 562-865-4549 Last Sunday of the month.

SUNDAY JULY 7

Pasadena, CA. Pasadena City College Flea Market and Record Swap. 1570 E Colorado Blvd. Pasadena. 8am-3pm. FREE admission. Parking $2

SUNDAY JULY 21

Los Angeles, CA. Smorgasburg LA Record Fair Row DTLA 777 Alameda St Los Angeles 90021 10am-4pm. FREE info@beatswapmeet.com 213-973-7927

SUNDAY JULY 28

Buena Park, CA. Greater Orange County Record Show. UFCW Union Hall – 8530 Stanton Ave. $3. 10am-3pm. 562-865-4549 Last Sunday of the month.

SUNDAY AUGUST 4

Pasadena, CA. Pasadena City College Flea Market and Record Swap. 1570 E Colorado Blvd. Pasadena. 8am-3pm. FREE admission. Parking $2

SUNDAY AUGUST 18

Los Angeles, CA. Smorgasburg LA Record Fair Row DTLA 777 Alameda St Los Angeles 90021 10am-4pm. FREE info@beatswapmeet.com 213-973-7927

SUNDAY AUGUST 25

San Francisco, CA. KUSF Rock N Swap. University of San Francisco 2130 Fulton St.7am-3pm. 415-422-2836 for info

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 1

Pasadena, CA. Pasadena City College Flea Market and Record Swap. 1570 E Colorado Blvd. Pasadena. 8am-3pm. FREE admission. Parking $2

SAT & SUN OCT 11, 12, 13

Burbank, CA.Hollywood Record Show. 1570 E Colorado Blvd. Pasadena. 8am-3pm. FREE admission. Parking $2

FRI-SUN, OCT 11, 12, 13

Burbank, CA. Hollywood Record Show. Hollywood/Burbank Marriott Hotel. 2500 North Hollywood Way, Burbank, CA. Friday VIP only, 7am-10pm. Saturday VIP 8am-10am; general 10am-6pm. Sunday VIP 9am-10am; general 10am-6pm. $50 all days/re-entry VIP admission. $15 daily general admission. Sponsored by 180 Grams. Tickets available at Rockaway Records, 2395-B Glendale Blvd., Silver Lake, CA 90039, (323) 664-3232 and Freak Beat Records, 13616 Ventura Blvd., Sherman Oaks, CA 91423, (818) 995-7603. Valet, self-parking and free street parking. Info: hollywoodrecordshow.com

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BE BOP CONTINUED FROM PAGE 44

the basis of Gordon's regular repertoire.

By the 1970s, Dexter Gordon would be among the many jazz giants who would regularly play at festivals in Japan. From 1975 comes the previously unreleased live recording *Tokyo 1975* (Elemental Music), which again features backing from Drew, Pederson and Heath in a program highlighted by a rendition of Thelonious Monk's "Rhythm-a-Ning" and Gordon's own "Fried Bananas."

Gordon's return to America in 1976, brilliantly orchestrated by manager Maxine, was greeted as a major event in the jazz world. Gordon would make the most of it by touring throughout the country and recording extensively for Columbia and Blue Note.

But Dexter would not limit his touring to the U.S. and Japan. From 1973 comes *At The Subway Club – Koln Germany 1973* (Elemental Music) which includes CD bonus recordings from elsewhere in Europe totaling over an hour of addition music. A later stop in Paris yielded *Espace Cardin 1977* (also on Elemental Music), which features Gordon in his only known performance with bebop piano pioneer Al Haig. The quartet for this particular club date is rounded out by bassist Pierre Michelot and drummer Kenny Clarke.

In 1982, Dexter returned to his home town of Los Angeles

to play the Playboy Jazz Festival at the Hollywood Bowl. The resulting set (*Dexter Gordon – Live at the Playboy Jazz Festival* on Run Out Groove) features Woody Shaw on trumpet, Kirk Lightsey on piano and as special guest on two extended tracks, the vibraphonist Milt Jackson. Due to contractual issues at the time it was recorded, the set was only partially released on vinyl in the early 1980s. This edition restores the Milt Jackson tracks to this outstanding set; bringing the complete performance to fans for the first time.

By December 1982, Gordon was recorded again at the Keystone Korner club for *Dexter Gordon Quartet – San Francisco '82* (Hi-Hat), which finds Dexter and company playing their standard set augmented by several Christmas tunes.

By the mid-1980s, Gordon would slow down his touring to star in the 1986 film *Round Midnight,* for which his portrayal of an expatriate jazz musician during the early 1960s earned him an Academy Award nomination.

As his health started to decline in the late 1980s, Gordon would occasionally tour and play jazz festivals in Europe and Japan, where additional unreleased tapes may exist. While he has been gone for close to thirty years, we may not have heard the last from Dexter Gordon.

Armand Lewis buys and sells rare Jazz LPs. He can be reached at mrbluenote@peoplepc.com

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